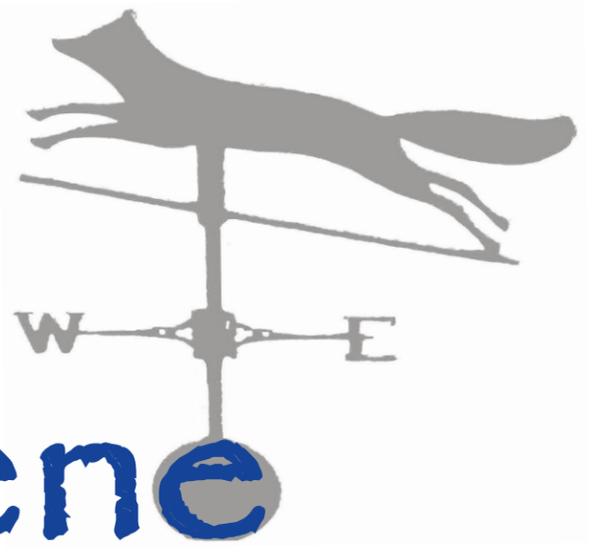


Swamp Fox Scene



A FREE monthly news magazine for the citizens and visitors of the Swamp Fox City

Volume 3, Issue 11

April 2013

Don't forget to vote!

Tuesday, April 9

Marion's registered voters go the polls.

Questions?

Call the Marion County Voter Registration & Election Commission at 423-8268.

Seeking to better your computing skills?

Various software and other computer classes will be offered in the Swamp Fox Computer Lab.

Call Dionne Vance
1-843-506-9560
for information.
Fees apply.

Making Marion Grow: New Marion Community Garden kicks off first growing season

It's that time of the year again! The days are getting longer, the birds are singing in the trees, and the flowers are beginning to bloom. Yes, it's Spring! Some people have already ordered their seeds and are planning their backyard gardens; and, so are we!

The newly revamped Marion Community Garden is operating in full gear to get ready for this growing season. CommonHealth Community Gardens is a non-profit organization working to establish community gardens in rural South Carolina. On April 13 the group, spearheaded locally by Sarah Allen-Gerald will officially open the Marion Community Garden to local residents and agriculture enthusiasts. The new garden is boasting 10 raised beds that will be rented to individuals and families who want and need inexpensive, healthier produce.

The goal of the community garden is to create a space where members of the Marion community have access to more knowledge and resources that enable them to produce their own food. Volunteers can enjoy the fresh air and relaxing environment, while growing food for local charities and the Marion Farmers Market. The garden will also be host to workshops, bringing in expert gardeners from all over the state, educating growers in the Marion community on planting, harvesting, and eating healthy, local food.

On April 13, from noon-4 p.m., CommonHealth Community Gardens is inviting any Marion resident interested to attend the grand opening at the garden on North Withlacoochee Avenue, near the Marion Hike and Bike Trail. CommonHealth Community Gardens will be accepting old tool donations in exchange for food, music, and festivities! Come help "Marion



Have you shopped Marion lately?

Historic Marion Revitalization Association, Olde Towne Marion, hopes to launch, in the next six weeks, its own version of a "shop local" program.

Marion's "MOM's Buy Local" is one way to show the locally-owned businesses that they have our collective support. Instead of shopping in Horry or Florence Counties, or some other locale, when at all possible, SHOP MARION! Instead of ordering online, BUY LOCAL! Instead of supporting chains, SHOP MARION business owners!

MOM's (Merchants of Marion) Buy Local program is designed to keep our locally owned and operated businesses near our back doors.

With more details to come in the next few weeks, look for ways to support our local merchants. A national movement touting the same idea, the 3/50 project, asks shoppers to think about which three local shops they would miss if they were to go out of business. (That's the 3.) Then shoppers are to decide to spend \$50 each month in those businesses. (That's the 50.) According to statistics on the 3/50 website, for every \$100 spent in locally owned and operated stores, \$68 returns to the community. Spending with a national chain only returns \$43 per \$100 spent.

The idea of picking three stores and spending \$50 a month in them, and encouraging your friends to do the same, makes a positive impact on the local economy. Olde Towne Marion's "MOM's Buy Local" program is sure to inspire us all to spend more locally and less elsewhere!

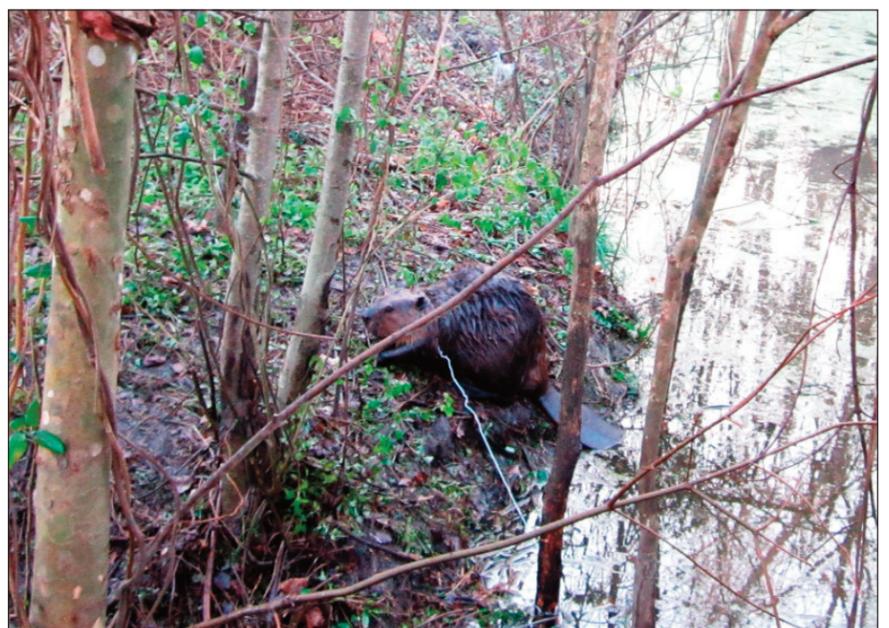


Photo by Winky Fore

Another culprit caught!

During the past couple of months at least six beavers have been taken out of Catfish Canal near the old mill at the bridge on U.S. Highway 76 in Marion. The colony of beavers, one of which weighed 65 pounds, have created a dam completely across the canal, city officials said. The dam will be broken down to allow for the free flow of water.

CITY NEWS

Brown is city's top employee for February

The City of Marion is proud to announce Sanitation Department employee Hezekiah Brown as its February 2013 Employee of the Month.

Hezekiah, shown at right, has been employed with the City since June 2007 and was previously named Employee of the Month in February 2012.

He and his coworkers are responsible for collecting large household items and yard debris from citizens and transporting the items to the landfill.

Brown stepped up to the plate in recent months and filled in to help even more when a fellow employee, who usually assists Superintendent Winky Fore in the managing of the Department, was out on medical leave.

Hezekiah has been leading the crew as Fore needs him to do so. He has earned his co-workers' respect and leads them,



helping the crews to continue working hard in the absence of their supervisor.

"Hezekiah is always willing to work special events, too," Fore said, noting that Brown recently participated with Street Department employee Jeneral Harps in the City's Employee Couch to 5K program.

Hezekiah is a dependable employee with a quiet demeanor, friendly smile and strong work ethic.

"He has become an effective leader in the Sanitation Department, keeping it operating smoothly and debris cleaned up

around the city," added City Administrator Alan Ammons. The Mayor and City Council recognized Hezekiah for his dedicated service to the City and its citizens at the March 12 Council Meeting.

Coming in April!

Keep up with what's going on around Marion!
Get your event listed! Call City Hall at 423-5961.



Foodies & Film groups: The Arts Council of Marion County has a Foodies of Marion County Group and a Film Group. Each meets once a month. For details, call Randy Floyd, 843-992-1627, or Chuck Wiegert, 843-423-9918.

Tuesday, April 9th: 7 a.m.-7 p.m., *City Council & Mayoral Election*

Tuesday, April 9th: 6:30 p.m., *City Council Meeting*, Council Chambers.

Wednesday, April 3rd: *Rise and Shine* at The Grove on Harlee Place, 8:30 a.m. Community networking opportunity. Come and bring a friend ... It's free!

Monday, April 8th: *Le Leche League of the Pee Dee* meets in the Sunday School House of the Church of the Advent, 103 East Mullins Street, Marion. Group is for mothers-to-be; Other

momms encouraged to attend. Group meets Second Monday of each month. Come and learn more ... Call 843-360-0101 for details.

Saturday, April 13th: *Living History* at the Marion County Museum, Call Rosanne at 423-8299 for details.

Saturday, April 13th: *Farmers Market* reopens in the Plaza on Main Street (130 block on North Main). This is the start of the 2013 season, where farmers and crafters bring their goods to town every Saturday through December!

Saturday, April 13th: *Opening Day* for City Rec's T-Ball, Baseball, and Softball. Call Russ for details at 843-423-5410.

Saturday, April 20th: 4th annual *Spring Frogmore Fest*, Dozier Street on the Courthouse Square, starting at 5:30 p.m. Brought to you by Olde Towne Marion; Tickets are \$15 per person and includes Frogmore Stew & live music! Beer & Wine will be sold.

Monday, April 22nd: Noon - 2 p.m., "Shred Day" in the Baxley Hardware Parking lot. See story on page 4 ...

Coming in May ...

Friday, May 3rd: 5:30 p.m. at the Marion Emporium on Main Street, *Olde Towne Marion's Annual Meeting and Incredible Edible and Fun*

Stuff Auction. Come join the fun! Call Chuck at 423-9918 for details.

Saturday, May 4th: 7 a.m. *Olde Towne Marion Yard Sale* in the Parking lot between Arch and Harlee Streets. \$5 buys you a space; Come and buy or sell your treasures! Call Chuck for details!

Saturday, May 4th, 7 a.m.-2 p.m., *Friends of Paws to the Rescue* are sponsoring a Yard Sale at the corner of Dozier and Tom Gasque Streets in Marion to benefit the Marion County Animal Shelter, run by Paws to the Rescue. Donations for sale will be accepted. Call Heather Roy at 843-468-1300 to arrange for pick up of goods. Come and support the caring of our abandoned animals!

FOXTROT coming in MAY!
Reserve the dates and plan to play!
May 16-18 in Marion on Main Street.

FYI!
Farmers Market reopens in the Plaza on Main Street! 9 a.m., Saturday, APRIL 13! Call Chuck at 423-9918 for details.

"Prayer Patrol"
Pastor Joshua Nelson, of Marion's Mt. Olive 7th Day Adventists Church, wants the community to know that members will be walking the streets of Marion, praying for individuals and the city. The "Prayer Patrol," will use this opportunity to hear about the city's needs, to build relationships, and to send up prayers, Nelson said. For information, call him at 209-605-1326.

Questions about your water or sewer bill?
Call Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority at (843) 765-4539 or visit them in City Hall on Main Street.

NEED HELP?
Call City Hall, 843-423-5961, unless otherwise noted, and one of the following will be able to help you...
Mayor Rodney Berry, 843-423-8235
City Administrator, Building Official Alan Ammons, Ext. 19
City Clerk Pam Jones, Ext. 10
City Treasurer Patricia Brown, Ext. 18
Municipal Court Clerk Heather Evans, 843-423-8616
Personnel, Purchasing Director Elizabeth Ficik, 843-423-8614
Planning & Zoning Admin Assistant Vickie Nichols, Ext. 11
Recreation Admin Assistant Cheryl Askins, 843-423-5410

The *Swamp Fox Scene* is the City of Marion's free monthly newspaper for citizens and visitors of the Swamp Fox City, Marion, South Carolina.
Printed by Herald Multi-forms in Dillon, city employees produce and distribute the newspaper. The Marion Chamber and HMRA help pay printing costs.
A PDF version is available by e-mail or online. For information about the newspaper, call Mayor Rodney Berry or City Administrator Alan Ammons at 843-423-5961.

IT'S IN OUR HANDS!
SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S CONCERN.
Together, we can make a difference ...
The City of Marion has a **TEXT A TIP** line ...
See a crime happening? Have a TIP?
Text it to 430-0938.

City honors employees, others at annual banquet

On March 19, City of Marion employees and their guests, elected officials and other community members attended and were honored at the annual City of Marion Employee Banquet.

One of the highest honors of the night went to Glenn Bridgers as the **Employee of the Year**. The award recognizes one City Employee who excelled in his or her work in the past year, Mayor Rodney Berry said in making the presentation. A committee is appointed by the Mayor to receive nominations from Department Heads for the award and then members select the employee they believe has made the most significant contributions to the City. The award was started by former Mayor T. Carroll Atkinson, Jr. to recognize an employee for outstanding service.

According to information from the Street Department Supervisor Ronnie Sanders, Glenn, shown at right with Mayor Berry, is known for his quiet demeanor and friendly smile. "There is no job too large or too small for him to tackle. From cutting grass, manhandling the scarecrows on Main Street or decorating for Christmas, which includes being run ragged by the decorating divas at City Hall, he is willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done," Sanders said.

"Glenn doesn't know the meaning of the word quit and he did not allow the Street Department to miss a beat when Ronnie was out on medical leave," Berry added.



Kicking off the night's awards was the **Fire-fighter of the Year Award**, presented by Fire Chief

Trey Cooper to Justin Trapp, shown at right with Chief Cooper.

The **Outstanding Police Officer Award**, presented by Capt. Cindy Barr, was given to Anthony Bacchuss, shown below with Capt. Barr.

Bacchuss returned to the Marion Police Department in November 2011. He has committed his life to Law Enforcement, Barr said, and takes the initiative to work not only for the community but with the community to help prevent crimes. "He is proactive in the betterment of the Police Department and the community," she said.



Garnering the 2012 *Police Chief's Award* was Jack L. "Trey" McCaskill. McCaskill, shown at the top of the third column with Capt. Barr, began working with the department in July 2011 and has proven himself to be a dedicated, respectful and committed officer, Chief Gray wrote in his award letter.

Service Awards were given to the following for their years of service to the city and its citizens:

Five Years – Fire Chief Trey Cooper, who began his service with the city as the Assistant Fire Chief. He was pro-



moted to Fire Chief in June 2010. Chief Cooper serves on the South Carolina Fire Fighter Association's Strategic Planning Committee and Recruitment Retention Committee.

Assistant Fire Chief Chris McKenzie, who became a volunteer firefighter in 2007, was appointed as Assistant Chief in February 2012. He joined the Fire Department with more than 20 years experience in emergency services, including firefighting, law enforcement and paramedic.

Josh Brown, Fire Department Engineer, is a Firefighter/EMT as well as a resident Fire Marshall; and Ranger Miller, a volunteer firefighter.

Police Lt. Tony Flowers, who has been an integral part of the Department, quickly being promoted to Training Officer. Lt. Flowers serves as an Investigator and was named Officer of the Year in 2008.

Police Sgt. Keith McNeil came to the City and graduated from the Police Academy in 2007. He was the recipient of the Police Chief's Award for 2009, and along with PFC Chris Hucks, thwarted an attempted bank robbery in 2011. Sgt. McNeil also received the Chief's Award for 2011.

Sherry Ransom, a Crossing Guard at Easterling Primary School; and **Hezekiah Brown**, Sanitation Department employee. Hezekiah is a dedicated employee, helping to keep Marion clean each week day. He was named Employee of the Month for city in February 2012 and February 2013.

Elizabeth Fick, who has been Personnel/Purchasing Director for the City of Marion, wears many other hats including serving on the Safety Committee, Employee Wellness Committee, and as the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator. In keeping with her encouragement of employees to get fit and stay healthy, including leading the Couch to 5K Program, she has become a dedicated 10k runner and winner of races, including Overall Top Female in this year's Historic RunFest.

10 Years – Fire Department Lt. Kevin Hammond, has been a volunteer fireman since 2001 and serves as a Lieutenant and fire instructor with the department.

15 Years – Naomi Blackwell, a Crossing Guard at Marion Intermediate School.

20 Years – Mike Richardson, Building Maintenance, began working for the City in 1992 and is the "jack-of-all-trades" for all things that are painted, built, fixed and more. He also serves on the City's Safety Committee, the ADA/Section 504 Committee and Review Committee. The Historic Train Depot, where the Chamber of Commerce is located, was restored by Mike.

Robbie Johnson, Recreation Department, who began working part-time at

Grice's Recreation Center in 1979. He joined the City full-time in 1992 and has done almost every job associated with recreation in Marion. He



oversees the Swamp Fox Computer Lab and assists with maintenance and upkeep for the auditorium and Swamp Fox Higher Education Center.

25 Years – Council Member Bobby L. Davis, long-time public servant of the citizens of Marion, has served on City Council since September 1987. In 1993, Councilman Davis was elected Mayor Pro-Tem of the Marion City Council and held that position for 16 years.

Councilman Davis is an advocate for the elderly. He and his wife, Geneva, have spent numerous hours working the community gardens, picking and delivering fresh vegetables to many of our older citizens. In honor of his service, in 2010, Mill Street was officially renamed Bobby L. Davis Boulevard.

Volunteer Firefighter Walter Ray, who has served since 1986.

35 Years – Fire Department Captain Ben Bethea, who joined the department in 1977 and has faithfully served in many functions. He is the department's Safety Captain.

Retirees – Perry Mason, a former Street Department employee, was the only retiree this year. He retired after 21 years of service. In July 2012, Perry was named "Employee of the Month. All are to be commended on their years of dedication, loyalty and hard work.

Public Service Award – For outstanding public service to the City of Marion, presented by Councilwoman Odessa Gregg, the 2012 Public Service Award was presented to LaToria Lewis, executive director of the Marion Boys & Girls Club.

"This year's winner is very involved with helping local children realize their full potential as productive, responsible and caring citizens," Gregg read from the award letter. "Since February 2011, The Boys & Girls Club of Marion has provided guidance and programs for an average of 65 club members per day." LaToria is shown above with Council member Gregg.



MORE NEWS IN MARION

Chamber's 'Shred Day' returns to Marion

What? Shred Day!

When? Monday, April 22, Noon - 2 p.m.

Where? Baxley Hardware Parking lot

Quickly following the April 15th tax day deadline is the need to destroy all those receipts, documents and older tax forms.

The Marion Chamber of Commerce has a solution to any confidential document storage problem, giving its members, the local business community and

individuals an opportunity to clear out old paper files.

For the third year in a row, the Cintas company will come to Marion and accept your home or office documents and then securely dispose of them when the Chamber conducts its "Shred Day" in the parking lot behind Baxley Hardware.

Cintas, a company that oversees the shredding and disposal of all types of documents, will have a secure shredder set up in that location.

This project is sponsored by Ashley Brady at First Charter Company and Stacy Smith at Wheeler Street Package. There is no fee for this service, but the Chamber will accept donations toward their 2013 Education Program.

There is a limit to the number of boxes of materials to be shredded. For the specific times and date, or for more information about this year's "Shred Day," call Judy at the Chamber office, 843-423-3561.



Marion group wins award

The City of Marion has received South Carolina's prestigious 2012 Silver Palmetto Award. The award is presented annually by the S.C. Commission on Disabilities and Special Needs, to the city or town that makes the most outstanding contribution to people with disabilities during the previous year. Commission Chairman Fred Lynn presented the award to Marion Mayor Rodney Berry and friends during the Municipal Association of South Carolina meeting in Columbia. The Commission is the governing board of the SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN).

Shown in the photo above are, from left, sitting, Fred Lynn, Chairman, S.C. Disabilities and Special Needs Commission; Mayor Rodney Berry; and Odessa Gregg, City Councilwoman. From left, standing, are Donna Hinton, Supervisor, Marion Center; Mike Keith, Executive Director, Marion-Dillon Disabilities and Special Needs Board; Cynthia Breeden, Director, Day Program; Maggie Beck, Board Member; and Lois Park Mole, Director, Government and Community Relations, SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs.

Marion Chamber of Commerce conducts ribbon-cutting



In a Marion Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting on Feb. 27, two ancillary businesses of The Grove officially were opened. In addition to providing upscale bed and breakfast accommodations, The Grove, 408 Harlee Place, operates The Joinery and Marion's "Smallest Gift Shop." The Joinery and Grove Gift Shop are open to the public. The Joinery, a woodworking shop, specializes in the design, construction and repair of fine furniture, as well as creating unique products from wood. Matt Wheeler, apprentice, is in The Joinery Tuesdays through Thursdays, and the joinery is open Monday through Saturday for tours and consultation. "Instruction on furniture repair and joinery is available and can be arranged," said Denley Caughman, manager of The Grove.

The Gift Shop features items produced in South Carolina, other collectables and the Grove blend coffee and Grove grits. The shop is in the servant's house, which also offers one of the best examples of an early 20th Century country kitchen in operation. Cooking classes in this setting are also offered and can be scheduled. The Grove is open to the public for tour, with tickets available through the Chamber of Commerce. For information on The Grove visit the website, groveandb.com or call 843-423-5220.

Zero Tolerance for litter!

BEWARE!

In keeping with its efforts to Keep Marion County beautiful, the City of Marion & Marion County will take part in the state's Zero Tolerance for Litter Campaign and conduct the annual county-wide clean-up April 15-22.

Kick your trash to the curb ... and DON'T litter!

Marion Chamber of Commerce announces Yard of the Month

The Marion Chamber of Commerce Yard of the Month award for March 2013 goes to Mr. and Mrs. J.C. Thompson, 811 Smith Street. The Chamber is proud to recognize those in our community that work so diligently, and add so much to our community's unique character. Mr. and Mrs. Thompson will be receiving a gift certificate from Tru Green Nursery in recognition of this honor.

